



Sgt. Irving L. Slater USAF

September 30, 1924 - June 18, 2018

Sgt. Irving L. Slater, USAF

Irv was born in Los Angeles and graduated from Alhambra High School in 1943. Played football as a lineman and was Commissioner of Athletics. He had already enlisted in the Army Air Corp Cadet program so he went straight into the service upon graduation. Completed basic training in Wichita Falls, TX, then sent to CTD (College Training Detachment) in Jamestown, North Dakota for Officers Training and Aeronautics school for about 6 weeks. Then back to CA for classification in Santa Ana. Classified as Pilot and Navigator. Then off to Aerial Gunnery School in Kingman, AZ for 6 weeks.

From there he was sent to Flying and Navigation school in San Marcos, TX, (Randolph Field), where he was hospitalized for a strep throat, washed out of his class and he was sent back to Kingman to be a Gunnery Instructor. While there he also worked in the NCO Club. They re-assigned him to the 813th Engineering Aviation Battalion at Geiger Army Airfield in Spokane, WA where he became a heavy equipment operator. They were shipped out for the Invasion of Okinawa in April of 1945. Codenamed "Operation Iceberg" the Battle of Okinawa was the bloodiest and incurred the largest number of casualties in the Pacific theater during World War II.

Similar to the Navy Seabees, he was involved in the refurbishing and

construction of airfields in support of the battle and served on Okinawa until the end of the war. He was awarded the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal and World War II Victory medal. After the war he left the service and pursued his passion to become a Professional Photographer by enrolling in courses at John Muir Junior College, (now Pasadena City College), then a commercial photography school in Los Angeles in 1947, Fred Archer School of Photography. He received a diploma for completing a 3 year course of study in 2 years.

In January 1950 after freelancing he found a job at the Long Beach Airport in the Air Force reserve center photo lab. He had to join the 452nd Bombardment Wing on reserve status as a Corporal and signed a Category R contract to remain there. In August 1950 the commanding General broke their contracts, ordered the 452nd to active service when the Korean War broke out, moved the wing to Itazuke Air Base in Japan in October and began B-26 combat operations over Korea against communist forces. They then moved to Miho Air Base in December.

Irv was assigned to the 730th Bomber Squadron where they flew medium-level armed reconnaissance, interdiction bombing and close air support sorties. They bombed and strafed buildings, tunnels, rail lines, switching centers, bridges, vehicles, supply dumps and airfields. As part of the 3 man crew on the B-26 Invader he was the Senior Turret Specialist or Aerial Gunner and also shot aerial photographs of their reconnaissance missions. He and his crew were awarded "Hero" plaques for completing the 1000th sortie of the squadron. (shown in the pic).

On their 13th mission in February 1951, his plane, the "Miss Sharon II" sustained anti-aircraft fire to one of the engines, it caught fire and fell off. The pilot managed to crash land the plane back across friendly lines but Irv had to bail out in the area between North and South Korea known as "No Man's

Land". He jumped out the bomb bay door and was wounded by shrapnel fire that hit his back and broke his ribs as he parachuted down. He found some Korean children who led him to a South Korean Police patrol that saw their plane get shot down.

On this mission they also had a 4th man, a crew chief who jumped but they were too low by that time and his chute didn't open so he was killed. Irv found him and took his 45 caliber side arm in case he needed an extra gun to fight his way out. After a two and a half hour walk he and the police patrol came upon some U.S. Army combat engineers working on the road. They gave him and the patrol a ride in their truck over to where the plane was. It was pretty well burned up and no sign of the pilot and navigator.

The police found out from some other villagers nearby that another patrol took them to Suwon Air Base. The engineers took him there also where he found that they had already been flown back to Miho in Japan. They patched him up and he caught another plane going there and was finally reunited with his crew.

After some deserved R&R and a promotion to Sergeant, Irv and his crew went back on flight status and flew another 37 missions for a total of 50. In one of their most important missions they supported the 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment's mass parachute drop over North Korean lines at Munsan-ni in March. Leading the troop carrier aircraft over the target area, they dropped 500 pound bombs, fired rockets and strafed the CCF front line.

They moved the wing again, this time to Pusan East Air Base in South Korea where they were to begin night missions. Since he had flown so many missions he was given the option to return home so he jumped at the chance before they began the night bombing runs. So in September 1951 he made it

home and discharged for good at March Air Force Base.

He was awarded the Air Medal for valor and gallantry in combat, the Korean Service Medal, the FEAF Group Medal (Japan) and the Purple Heart. His wife Viola of almost 60 years of marriage passed away in June 2012. She was also a veteran of World War II in the U.S. Coast Guard. She was one of the first SPARS and served from 1941 to 1946 in their intelligence branch in Washington D.C. and then Long Beach, CA, where Irv and Vi met at Vivian Laird's Night Club. She had already left the service, Irv had recently got back from Korea and discharged at March AFB in Riverside. 3 months later they were married at the San Gabriel Mission on Thanksgiving Day 1952. Irv is survived by his sister Anne Thatcher, sons Joseph Slater and Martin Slater, grandsons Jason Slater, Joshua Slater and Michael Slater, granddaughters Stefanie Slater, Amy Ford and Karen Slater, great-grandson Kobie Slater.

Previous Events

Viewing

JUL 6. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (PT)

Pacific View Memorial Park
3500 Pacific View Drive
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625

Funeral and Celebration of Life

JUL 6. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (PT)

Pacific View Memorial Park
3500 Pacific View Drive
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625

Graveside Service with Honors

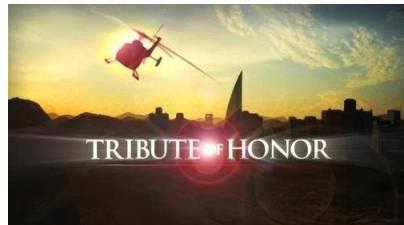
JUL 6. 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM (PT)

Miramar National Cemetery
5795 Nobel Dr
San Diego, CA 9211

Tribute Wall



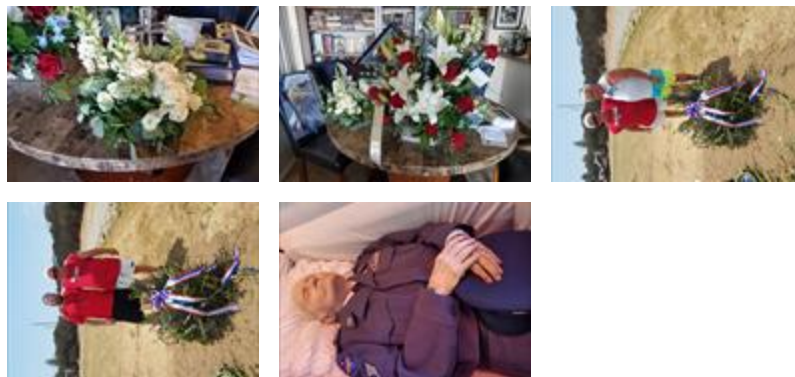
“ Reflecting on Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Sgt. Irving L. Slater USAF



Reflecting on Memories - July 02, 2018 at 10:18 PM



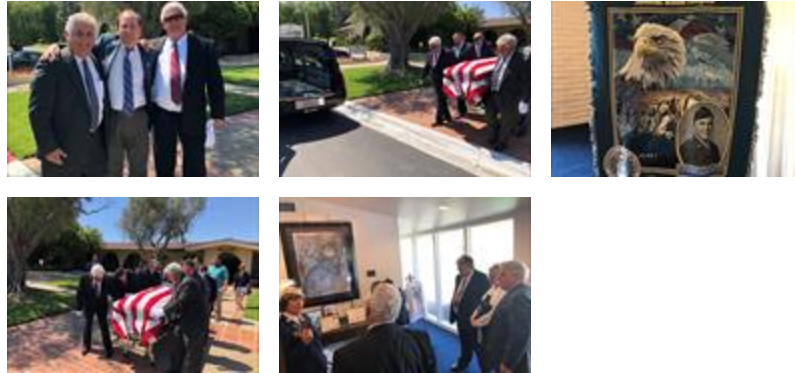
“ 9 files added to the album Funeral Memories Album



Marty Slater - July 30, 2018 at 09:59 PM



“ 10 files added to the album *Funeral Memories Album*



Reflecting on Memories - July 08, 2018 at 12:12 AM



“ 20 files added to the album *Our Memories Album*



Reflecting on Memories - July 05, 2018 at 09:46 PM



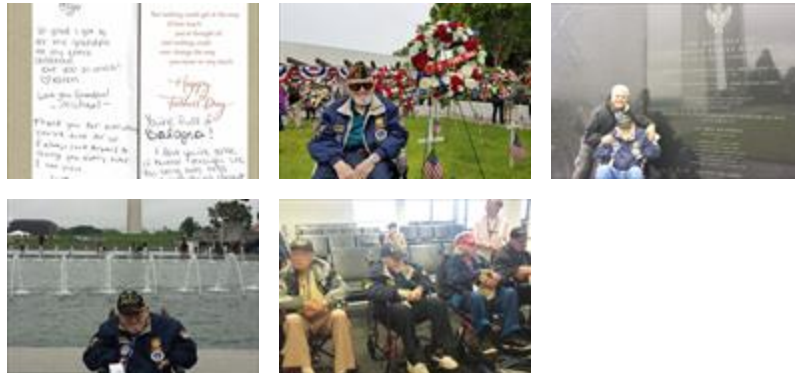
“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of *Sgt. Irving L. Slater USAF.*



July 03, 2018 at 04:24 PM



“ 162 files added to the album *Our Memories Album*



Reflecting on Memories - July 02, 2018 at 08:18 PM



“ 2 files added to the album *Memories Album*



Marty Slater - June 28, 2018 at 01:58 PM



“ *I knew Irv as a little 9 year old girl that lived across the street. Our families were good friends. Irv always made me feel like I was part of his family. I'll miss his stories, his kindness, his sense of humor and his love. Irv you're with Vi now (and both my parents) and that gives me peace. Love and miss you,*

Holly

Holly McGinty - June 27, 2018 at 06:52 PM

HM

My heartfelt condolences go out to the Slater family and extended family members at this time. May the memories you share of this great man comfort you in the coming days.

Holly McGinty - June 27, 2018 at 09:06 PM

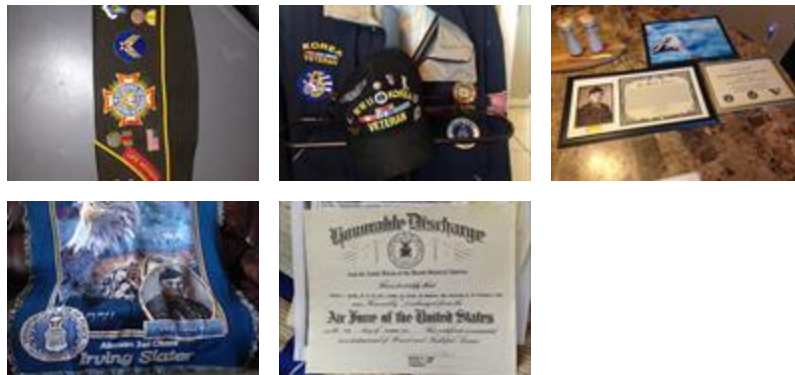
DL

“ I am gonna miss you Irv. It was my honor to be your hospice nurse. We shared some good laughs my friend. I'll always remember you and your mischievous smile. You are now “soaring where you can touch the face of God.”

Donna Beattie, LVN - June 19, 2018 at 02:26 AM



“ 10 files added to the album Slater Family Memories



Reflecting on Memories - June 18, 2018 at 09:15 PM